757 given to us in saucers, my mother invoking the Triple Gems while blowing on it and coaxing us to drink it as the medicine of the Three Gems: "*Paya-say, taya-say, thanga-say*," she would say: "Physic of the Buddha, of the Law, of the Clergy." After this came two saucersful of hot water in which betel leaves had been boiled, to raise a sweat; my mother would cover us with an ok-saung, my father would come in on tiptoe to look at us very often, even when our temperatures were nearly normal, and the fever would leave us quite soon.

Our purgative was *dat-le-ba-say*, physic of the four elements; it was a glutinous paste of senna for purging, tamarind as acid and purgative, jaggery to soothe, liquorice to taste, and salt. It was nasty. My mother rolled about a golf ball size of the stuff into little balls which we were expected to swallow. But she was very firm that there must always be an odd number of balls, because Burmese people believe that odd numbers are more auspicious, like the *Three* Gems, the *Nine* Nawaya; when the shinbyu ceremony for the initiation of boys into the priesthood is carried out, or the ears of the girls bored ceremonially, it is inauspicious to "do" an even number of children. So if my mother's golf ball of the purgative made eight balls, she would always pinch more stuff out of the jar and make nine, and, as I grew older and more sceptical, both my stomach and my mood would react on each other and I generally got stuck at the sixth or eighth, much to my mother's dismay. But to this day I believe in the efficacy of these particular medicines for my own system.

753 When any of us kept ailing over a long period it was felt that our
787 astronomical prospects were low, and the *bedin-saya*, vulgarly translated as fortune-teller, was called in. He was regarded as an astrologer. My mother brought out our horoscopes which had been cast by a brahmin when we were a few years old. These horoscopes, inscribed on a palm leaf doubled up and sewn tightly together, were precious objects kept at the head of my father's bed. The exact day and hour of the birth of the child, the auspicious name given according to this time and day, the astronomical bodies exerting influence over such a birth, and a table to show the heavenly influences which would prevail during the successive periods of the child's life so that future calculations could be made, were all inscribed finely on this neat yellow leaf. The bedin-saya made calculations now to see if our *kan* (fate, luck) was high or low; if low, he prescribed some counteracting influences. I was once given a chicken as a *khamè*, a charm which would keep the evil influences at bay, and the servants fed the chicken for me until I had recovered. Sometimes it is certain foods which bring the evil influences, and the proscribing of them even during good health was more annoying. One of my sisters, treated thus as a child, complained that the bedin-saya was a tiresome

old man with rhetorical leanings and included things because they formed a nice rhyme, and, indeed, she was not far from the truth. Our monosyllabic language is a heavenly gift to us with its endless scope for the most unrestrained punning and rhyming; the pun in Burmese is not execrable humour but a stepping stone for flights of fancy. What my sister was not allowed to eat were the three most precious foods as proverbalised in: *a-thi-hma tha-yet; a-ywet hma la-hpet; a-tha hma wet:* among fruits the *tha-yet*, among leaves the *la-hpet*, among flesh the *wet: tha-yet, la-hpet* and *wet* being the mango, the pickled tea-leaf and the pig's flesh respectively, and open to question as being really the prize specimens of their class, but certainly rhyming happily.

My parents were so good to us; they never scolded, beat or punished us that I can remember. Perhaps they had both had so much discipline in their own youths; I can remember the day we were told to answer them "Father" and "Mother" when they called us, instead of *Paya* as we had done formerly. Paya is the term of extreme respect and humility, sometimes adopted by children to parents, always by servants to their superiors, by subordinates to senior officials, and by all to royalty and the clergy. It is also the suffix to honorific titles. Its true and ancient use had associations of reverence only, but it has taken on a more subservient hue with the advent of government and foreign officials.

But whether we answered Paya or Father, my mother's guiding influence led us to look on my father with awe, even though he was the parent who clowned with us at home. We were always bathed and dressed before he came home, waiting for him. As soon as he entered the gate we raced down the drive to carry his umbrella, took him upstairs and scrambled to take his shoes off as soon as we could get him seated. His shoes, suspenders and socks were removed by combined efforts, my father pretending great helplessness all the while. We went for walks while my parents went to play tennis, but retuned in time to carry their racquets upstairs and remove my father's shoes again. After dinner my mother and we lay on mats while my father sat in an easy chair and pretended to get his nursery rhymes all wrong, until we taught him:

A-hpo gyi oh, hka kon kon,	Old man so bent and grey,
Ma thay ba hnin ohn	Do not die as yet we pray.
Naung hnit-kha ta-saung-mon	Till next December try to tarry
Pwè kyi ba ohn.	And watch the actors play and marry.

Or the voracious cat who ate everything:

Kyaung-gyi yè tè mi tan to	Oh you big and short tailed cat.
A-hai ko sa ba lo	Swallowing the lean
A-tha ko myo.	And eating the fat.

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Those born on Saturday have T, Ht, D, Dh, and N. The aspirated and unaspirated letters have to most Englishmen precisely the same sound, though a practised ear detects the difference immediately. Examples are:—Maung Ba Tu, Mr. Like His Father; Ma Ne Htun, Miss or Mrs. Sunshine; Maung Du Wun, Mr. Pole Star; Mi Nu, Miss Tender.

Those born on Thursday select from P, Hp, B, Hb, and M. For example:—U Po Mya, Old Grandfather Emerald; Maung Bo Gale, Mr. Little Officer; Ma Hmwe, Miss or Mrs. Fragrant; Mi Meit, Miss Affection.

Wednesday has L and W. Examples:—Maung Ho, Mr. Yonder; Ma Waing Hla, Miss or Mrs. All-Round Pretty; Ma Hein, Miss or Mrs. Growler.

From noon till midnight on Wednesday is represented as a special day, or, at any rate, under a special constellation called Yahu, and those born between those hours have the alternative of the two Y's, one of which is sounded R in Pali and by the Arakanese. Examples are:—Maung Yo, Mr. Honesty; Ma Yôn, Miss or Mrs. Rabbit, U Yauk, Old Individual. [194] [184]

Friday has Th and H. Examples:—Maung Than, Mr. Million; Maung Thet She, Mr. Long Life; Ma Thin, Miss or Mrs. Learned; Mè Thaw, (old) Mrs. Noisy.

A is the only letter assigned to Sunday, but the combination with it of the symbol of any other vowel changes it to the sound of that vowel. For example:—Maung Ôn, Mr. Cocoa-nut; Maung At Ni, Mr. Red Needle; Ma E, Miss Cold; Ma Eing Saung, Mrs. Housekeeper; U O, Old Pot.

A common popular belief is, that, according to the day of the week (or rather the constellation representing that day) on which a man is born, so will his character be. Thus a man's name discloses his probable characteristics to the superstitious. 828 551 787

A man born on Monday will be jealous; on Tuesday, honest; on Wednesday, short-tempered, but soon calm again, the characteristic being intensified under Yahu; on Thursday, mild; on Friday, talkative; on Saturday, hot-tempered and quarrelsome; on Sunday, parsimonious.

Not only has every day its special character and its fixed

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U Ngè, "Old Small" or "Old Wee"; or takes U Lugale instead, "Old Boy." To this additions may be made according to fancy. Indeed the possible forms of any given Burmese name would supply a very fair sum in permutations and combinations. 551 553

There is a similar freedom with the women's names. Every woman married or unmarried may be called Ma. When she becomes elderly Mè is very often used. Mi implies youth in the person addressed, or affection on the part of the speaker. A young husband or lover usually calls his lady love Mi Mi. She addresses him as Maung, "brother," or familiarly as Taw, or Shin. Ba in Lower Burma is a polite form. In Upper Burma, especially in the Palace, Maung Maung, or Tin Tin, or Teit Tin (prostrating the forehead, Kowtowing) are used in a courteous way. It is considered hardly civil in any case to use the bare name; the office held, or some particular alms given by the person addressed, supplies the easiest equivalent; otherwise some friendly form is employed in speaking. Kin-le is used similarly in familiar fashion or in a friendly way to those of lesser rank. Thus a prince would use it in addressing an A-pyo-daw, a maid of honour. 554

Sometimes when a boy grows up he does not like the name his parents gave him. He can then change it by a very simple process. He makes up a number of packets of le'-pet and sends round a friend to deliver them to all his acquaintances and relations. The messenger goes to the head of the house and says: "I have come from Maung Shwe Pyin (Mr. Golden Stupid). He is not to be called by that name any more. When you invite him call him Maung Hkyaw Hpe (Mr. Celebrated Father). Be good enough to eat this pickled tea," and then he goes on to the next house. It is not imperative that the letters of the birthday should be adhered to, but it is usually done. Women very seldom change names. It looks too much like a broad hint that they are growing up and have some notion of themselves, or that they have a mind of their own, which might prove irksome to possible husbands. 553

A careful note is made of the exact hour of birth with the object of drawing up the sadā or certificate of birth 787

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which every Burman has, and carefully consults, with the help of an astrologer, for the fixing of fortunate days and hours throughout his life. Sometimes the sadā is drawn up very shortly after birth, but ordinarily not till the child is five or six years old. Then an old Pônna, a Brahmin, or any ordinary astrologer is called in. He records on a doubled up strip of palm leaf the year, the month, the day and hour at which the child was born; the name given to it; the planet in the ascendant at the moment of birth and the house in which it was at the time. This is scratched neatly on the palm leaf in the usual way with a metal style. On the other side are a number of cabalistic squares and numbers from which the future calculations may be made. There are said to be eight gyo, or planets, and from these the days of the week are named, Wednesday having a second, Yahu, which rules from mid-day to midnight. Each of the planets has its own point of the compass as follows:—

N.

Yahu. 12 Symbol—Tuskless Elephant. Wednesday, 12 P.M. to 12 A.M. Unnamed.	Thauk-kya. 21 Symbol—Guinea-Pig. Friday. Venus.	Taninganwe. 6 Symbol—Kalohn. Sunday. The Sun.
Kyathabade. 19 Symbol—Rat. Thursday. Jupiter.		Taninla. 15 Symbol—Tiger. Monday. The Moon.
Sane. 10 Symbol—Nagah. Saturday. Saturn.	Boddahu. 17 Symbol—Tusked Elephant. Wednesday, 12 A.M. to 12 P.M. Mercury.	Ainga. Symbol—Lion. Tuesday. Mars.

W. E.

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The stations, numbers, and symbols of the planets are recorded in a jingling rhyme, which is one of the first things boys learn in the monastic schools, *e.g.*—

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Taninla kya
Ta-sè nga
Ne nya
She yat ga.

Monday's number, I ween,
Is always fifteen;
The tiger's the beast,
And its place is the East.

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There are various ways of calculating the horoscope, most of them not to be understanded of the people, but the most popular, because the preliminaries are evident to everybody, is from the numbers given above. A person born on Monday remains under the influence of the moon for fifteen years. Then he passes into the house of Mars and sojourns there for eight years. At the age of twenty-three, Mercury presides over him and continues to do so for the next seventeen years, and so on to the end, which mounts up to 108 years. Should he outlive that he would begin the circle over again. Another way is to divide the inquirer's age by eight. If there is no remainder, the horoscope is made up from the gyo under which he was born. If there is a remainder, the Bedin Sayā counts it out round the figure, in the direction of the hands of a watch, commencing with the birth planet. Thus a man born on Thursday, now twenty-nine years of age, would be under the influence of the moon. The gyo at the four cardinal points, east, south, west, and north are happy in their influences, those on the diagonal rhumbs not so good. Yahu, and especially Saturday, have a particularly sinister influence. A man does most of the stupid and vicious things in his life while he is in Saturn's house. A young man born on Wednesday will need a lot of ballast to tide him through the ten years of Saturn, seeing that he enters on the danger at the age of seventeen.

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Little gilded and red painted signboards are put up at all the pagodas, displaying the nan, the symbol, and the relative position of all the planets. Sometimes people worshipping at the pagoda go to the point of the gyo, in whose house they were born, and offer up their lauds and candles there. But this is a mere matter of individual fancy, and is hardly open to those born in the diagonally situated

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houses, for the niche shrines, if there are more than one at the pagoda, are always at the four cardinal points, and if there is only one, as is usual at small pagodas, it is to the East.

The sadā is carefully kept by the parents until the child is old enough to take care of it himself, and thenceforward it is guarded as the most valuable possession the person has. No matter how often the name is changed the new one is never put in the sadā, so that this certificate cannot be trusted to implicitly for a man's name. Some of them are very beautifully engraved and ornamented, but they are naturally not often to be seen. I only know of two in England at the present time (1881), one of which is my own and the other belonging to a travelling Burman. When a man dies, the sadā is either destroyed or preserved as a memento by the family. A great many sadās were found and carried off as curiosities during the Third Burmese War. There is one at Abbotsford.

A curious instance of the firm belief of the nation in the reasonableness of the conviction that the planet under which one is born influences the fates and actions of one's life, is the fact that royalty ordained that the coins and measures used by traders should bear the emblem of the monarch's birthday. Thus for example all the gold coins used in Upper Burma bazaars during the penultimate reign had the figure of a lion on them, Mindôn Min having been born on a Tuesday. The few remaining from previous reigns bearing other symbols were rigidly kept out of the sight of Burmese officials. The Convenor of the Fifth Great Synod, though probably the mildest and best sovereign Burma ever had, would certainly have stood no trifling in matters of this kind, which, if not amounting actually to a part of the religion, were at any rate very intimately connected with it. His son Thibaw Min, however, notoriously indifferent to religion, if a stronger word might not even be admissible, let the old weights remain in use, and probably called it the march of civilisation.

The naming and the construction of the sadā being finished, the principal events in the youthful Burman's life are over, and the children run about in as happy a state of nudity as the respectability of the family permits; and boys and girls steal grandmamma's cheroot, and potter about

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making mud pies according to cosmopolitan infantile habit, and not seldom getting up decorous and serious representations of the choral dances and dramatic performances they have seen. The spectacle of a little girl vigorously puffing a big green cheroot while she moulds a heap of mud into shapely form is only a little more startling to the white-faced foreigner than the declamatory passion of a five-year-old princeling. So it goes on till the eighth year is reached; then it is time to go to the monastic school.

On the following page is a copy of the sadā of Shin Thuza. The young lady, I regret to say, is dead. The publication of her horoscope cannot therefore enable malicious persons to work her any harm by means of spells. The side represented is the obverse. I have submitted the figures to two very distinguished wranglers, but they have been unable to detect any system in them.

On the reverse, surrounded by an ornamental border of numbers written in accordance with a rhyme, are recorded in mystic language the details. The young lady was born in the year 1220 B.E. (twenty-three years ago), in the astrological cycle 422, in the month of Ta-bodwè, on the ninth of the waxing moon, and the seventh day (Friday) of the week, in the evening, at thôn chetti gyaw, a little past the third hour, or more exactly, three nayi, two pads, and ten birana. Then the precise position of the constellation in the heavens is noted. It is thirteen bāwa (feet), five finger breadths, three mayaw (grains' length), one sessamum seed (nan), and eight hairs' breadths from the planet. Then it winds up to the effect that this is the horoscope of the maiden, whom, that she may be known by a pleasant name, her parents have called Shin Thuza. "May she live to be a hundred and twenty!" Alas! she did not.

At either side of these details are two identical magic squares, formed in accordance with the well-known Hindoo Law. Over one is written "The Buddha"; over the other "The Law"; beneath the former "Rangoon," and the latter "650." The two palm-leaves are tightly sewn together, and the writings and figures, done with a metal style on the dry leaf, are very neatly executed.

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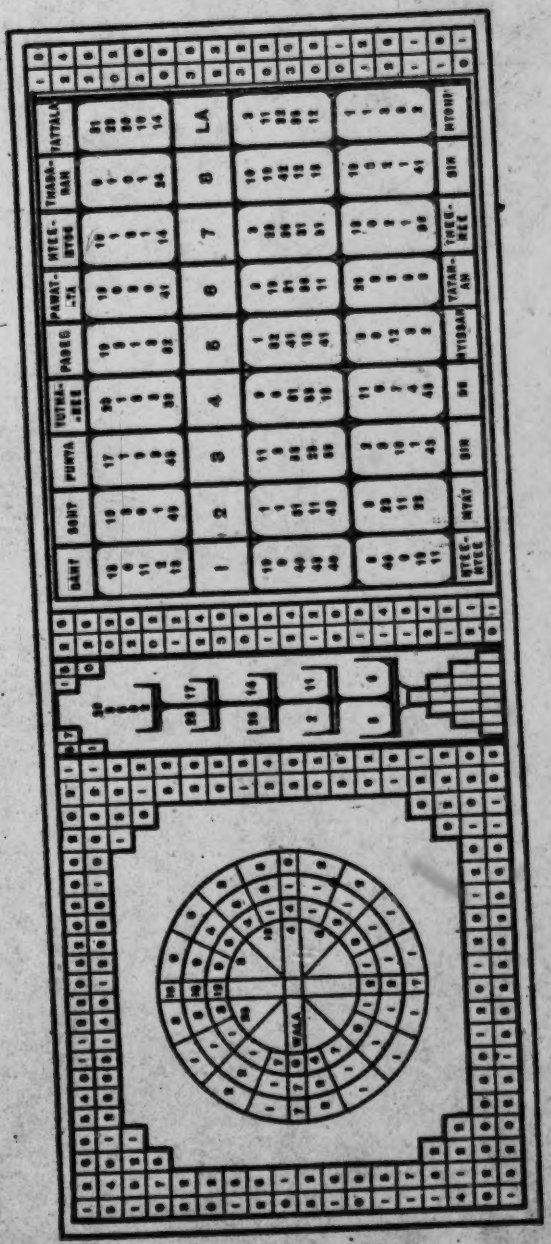

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The general construction of all sadās is the same, but there are very considerable divergences in the number of figures. In another—I do not say whose it is—there are two circles only in the left portion, and only eight divisions in the right half, while several of the headings to the columns are different. The ti-padi-taing, the "highest post," between the two, also varies. I may mention that, beginning with the second stage on the left, descending and going up the other side, the numbers increase by three: *eg.* 2, 5, 8, 11, etc. This is the case in all sadās, but they do not necessarily begin with the same number.

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Lower Burma

important age for the boy to be learning English and arithmetic, with a view to getting situations under Government or in English merchants' offices. Therefore in the vast majority of cases shin-pyu thi takes place at the age of twelve, or perhaps even a year earlier. 792 561 184 177.84

If the boy has been a scholar in the monastery beforehand, he is sure to be already prepared in all that is required of him. If not, he gets a few hasty lessons in the duties that will be incumbent on him. He must address a full member of the order in such and such language; he must walk decorously through the streets, keeping his eyes fixed on the ground six feet before him, and on no account gaze round him, no matter what exciting events may be going on; he must wear his thingan and du-gut in the prescribed fashion; he must eat with dignity and circumspection, and so on. All these details are set forth in most minute fashion in a code. When he has mastered the most essential portions, and has also given proof of an acquaintance with the ordinary forms of worship, all is ready. His horoscope now comes into requisition, and a bedinsayā or Ponna is called in to determine a lucky day and hour from the sadā. When this has been settled, three or four girls, the intending koyin-gale's sisters, or friends of the family, dress themselves up in their finest silks and jewels—often borrowing a large quantity of the latter—and go round the town, announcing to all relatives, friends, and neighbours when the induction will take place, and inviting them to the feast, presenting the little packet of le'-pet usual on such occasions. Almost all of these send some little present, either of money or victuals, to aid in the feast and make it as grand as possible. Not unseldom, if somebody else's son is also going to enter the kyaung and the town is not very large, the two join forces, while occasionally as many as half a dozen unite, especially if the families are not well off. 792 872 [576] [292] 792 561 [787] 796 [292]

On the appointed day the young neophyte dresses in his finest clothes, and loads himself with all the family gold chains and jewellery, and as much more as he can borrow for the occasion. He then mounts a pony or gets into a richly decorated car. Shaded by gold umbrellas, allowed formerly on this occasion only in Upper Burma, except to those who had got a special patent for them from the sovereign... [292] [554]

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Certain stones called amadé said to be found in the heads of birds, in trees, and in animals, are highly prized as amulets. They will guard from musket shots, or sword thrusts, from painful blows, or evil spirits. Hmaw sayās always have them. When they are placed on a child's face, or introduced into any one's blood, nat thwin thi, they introduce a spirit. The person so possessed falls into a trance, and may be questioned as to the doings of any other evil spirits in the neighbourhood.

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Letters, placed in the magic squares and triangular "in" are la-gyi, na-gyi, ka-gyi, ga-gyi (great *l*, great *n*, great *k*, and great *g*). Other very powerful s'ma, as these tattooed letters are called, are "round" sa, wa, la, and "bottom-indented" da. The arm is a favourite place for them.

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The belief of every Burman in the efficacy of these tattooed charms is practically ineradicable. In 1881, in Rangoon, a young man had the figure of the great Peguan byaing, the "paddy-bird," a species of egret, tattooed upon him. This was to be as efficacious in preserving him from drowning as a child's caul used to be considered by British sailors. When it was finished, he suggested that an immediate experiment should be made. Accordingly his hands and feet were tied, and he was tossed over the side of a boat into the river. The under-currents in the Rangoon river are very dangerous, and the poor fellow was never seen again. The tattooers, master and assistant, were brought up on a charge of murder, and convicted of manslaughter, but the great mass of the Burman population thought they were very hardly treated, and that the fact of an unlucky side-wind, some mischance in the calculation from the horoscope, the machinations of an evil-disposed person against the deceased, or something of that kind, which had caused the lamentable issue, ought never to have led to the conviction of the skilled sayās. That they were charlatans was never once hinted.

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modestly closed in front, and to prevent the dainty slipper, just covering her toes and no more, from slipping off the foot. However that may be, it is an accomplishment indispensable to a Burmese belle. She takes as much pains over it as she does with her jetty tresses. In a word, the nā-twin mingala transforms the girl into a woman, just as much as admission to a monastery makes the boy a man. It is her baptism, and is the distinctive mark of her race. Most of the men get their ears bored too, but the ceremony is not so solemn with them, and latterly is not so universal, at any rate not in the towns on the coast.

The ceremony takes place at the age of twelve or thirteen, just when the girl has attained puberty in fact. Her sadā is submitted to a soothsayer, that a fortunate day and hour may be chosen, and that being fixed, a great feast is prepared, and all the friends of the family and the relations are invited. An invitation to an ear-boring feast is a very urgent matter. No one can refuse without a very good excuse, and serious business is often postponed to the demands of such a ceremony. Everybody comes early, and sits down in any place he can find round about the front part and sides of the room, the girl, with all her female relatives about her, reclining on a mat at the back. The bedin sayā stalks about gazing at a mysterious strip of palm-leaf, or apparently wrapped in deep thought. Beside him is the professional ear-borer. He carries the needles, which are almost always pure gold, and even in the case of the poorest, never of any baser metal than silver. Rich people very often have them set at the ends with precious stones. At last the soothsayer gives the sign that the favourable moment has arrived. The ear-borer moves up immediately and passes the needles through the lobe of the ear, sometimes using a cork as they do in England, but more often letting them pass between two of his fingers. The girl, who has been worked up into a high state of excitement and terror by all the preparations, usually struggles and shrieks as hard as she can, but the women round about hold her down, and the band of music in the street outside strikes up a rapid movement and drowns her lamentations, while all the visitors burst into a flood of talk

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828 ignorant man's heart is all in one mass, while that of the well-instructed divides itself into three small parts.

885 779 581 As models of married women are held up the Taw le-wa, the most faithful and beautiful of wives, the consorts of four of the chief princes in the ten great Jatakas, treating of the last births of the Lord Buddha. To say that a girl is Taw le-wa win lauk, calculated to become like one of these four great queens, Amaya the wife of Mahawthata, the Solomon of Buddhist kings; Madi, the wife of Wethandaya, world-famed for his charity; Keinnayi or Thanbula, the partners of princes hardly less celebrated, is to pay the highest possible compliment to any woman. But these are somewhat vague and intangible matters. There are other recommendations which appeal much more directly to those intending to get married; to the man that seeks a wife, sanshwe, pure as "test gold"; or the girl who would avoid a linkwe, a "cur of a husband."

581 787 Prominent among these is the rhyme of "the hostile pairs," the yan-hpet, who, if they marry, will certainly have a short life.

Some violence is done to the niceties of language in the linga, so that I may be allowed the same in the translation of a portion of it.

Friday's daughter
Didn't oughter
Marry with a Monday's son;
Should she do it
Both will rue it,
Life's last lap will soon be run.

The same lamentable result would follow if the man were born on Friday and the woman on Monday. Again:

Saturdays and Thursdays,
The serpent and the rat,
You cannot find out worse days,
Life's short enough at that.

The serpent and the rat preside over Saturday and Thursday respectively. Similar curtailment of life would follow if the union was between Sunday and Wednesday, or between Tuesday and the eighth half-day Yahu. One or

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Burmese AP4

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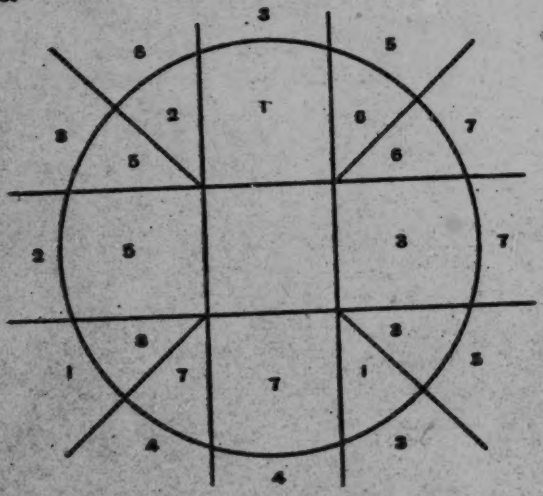
both contracting parties would soon die if children of these hostile days married.

On the other hand, there is an elaborate figure showing what unions according to birthdays will be lucky.

The numbers represent the days of the week according to the order. 1, Sunday; 2, Monday; 3, Tuesday; 4, Wednesday; 5, Thursday; 6, Friday; 7, Saturday; 8, Yahu (half Wednesday). The inner numbers represent the man's birthday; the outer the woman's. Those who choose their wives in accordance with this figure will be happy and well-to-do.



The outer ring the maiden's,
The inner ring the man's.
All ye who would live easeful
On this scheme form your plans.

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All these rhymes are learned by the little boys at school, sometimes formally taught them by the preceptor as an excerpt from the Bedin, sometimes, when the yahan refuses to recognise the validity of these books, studied surreptitiously along with the secular plays and song-books. Whatever else a girl may know, you may be sure she can give you the marriage rhymes.

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After the marriage has been settled upon, lucky combination of birthdays, parents' consent, settlement of dower and

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517 silks for their wives. The ordinary explanation is that every one can see what clothes you wear, while few people care to come and spy out what kind of a house you live in, and how you fare. But there can be very little doubt that the real 565 reason is a survival of the idea of the old Yāzagaing, as 342 well as the fact that long years of custom have impressed 641 upon everybody the opinion that there are only two forms of architecture, the secular and the ecclesiastical, and no one, no matter how sure he might be that the Government would take no notice of his ambition, would brave the denunciations of the religious by adding a spire to his house, or even adorning the gable ends with carved pinnacles and flamboyant finials of the monasteries. Consequently the one regular form prevails everywhere.

342 The Burman's dwelling, then, is always shaped more or 576 less like a marquee tent, and never more than one storey high, to avoid the humiliating possibility of the feet of some one being over your head. But the whole house stands on posts, so that the floor is seven or eight feet from the ground. It consists often of only one room, usually, however, of two or more, and to the front of the house there is always a verandah, three or four feet lower than the general level of the house, and as often as not quite open to the street, or the garden, or whatever may be in front and always to the sky. [551] The posts which form the main or central part of the house are usually six in number, and all have their names, such as 353 Uyu, Kya-hngan, Nyaung-yan. The south post, in the 776 main part of the house, the Thabye-taing, is the best known, as being always adorned with leaves and particularly marked as that in the top of which most probably lives the nat-spirit of the house. [764] A dead body, after being swathed, and while waiting for the coffin, is always placed by it.

341 A house ought never to be built till the foundations have ● 787 been thoroughly dug up and shown to a soothsayer. He will determine, from the substances found, whether it is a lucky place to build a house in or not. It stands to reason that the building cannot be commenced till a lucky day and hour have been sought out. There is considerable care to be observed in the selection of the timber. Posts are masculine, feminine, and neuter. Male posts are of equal size at both

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ends; females are larger at the base; those which swell out in the middle are a-thet ma-shi—without life; taing bilu, ogre's posts are largest at the top. As a general rule it may be taken for granted that if a house is built with neuter posts, its inmates will always be miserable and unlucky; if the posts are ogres, death and disaster will attend; male posts are easy-going and harmless; females, on the contrary, are fortunate and leading to honour. But it may happen that the character of the piece of ground on which the house is built upsets all these generalisations, so that it is necessary to get a wise man's opinion before you get your posts. The Deittôn gives many instructions on the subject, and among other things mentions how a man's fortune may be calculated from the Hle-ga-tit, the side pieces of the steps which lead up to the verandah. The presence or absence of knots, and if the former, their position, determines the luck of the householder.

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Poor people use bamboo instead of wood, and make their walls of mats, woven of the same substance, split up. Occasionally, however, they rise to the dignity of common jungle timber. Richer people make use of the invaluable teak, or of pyinkado (*Xylia dolabriformis*), a wood almost as durable, and equally expensive. White ants will attack neither of these. The walls of such houses are planked. The roof is sometimes composed of small flat tiles, but more commonly of thatch. This consists in most places in the Delta of dani, the leaves of the toddy palm, which are first soaked in salt water, a precaution which prevents insects from destroying them. Up country a species of grass called thekkè is universally used. This style of roofing is very satisfactory in every respect but one. It is cheap, easily put on, reasonably water-tight, but very inflammable, and consequently is not allowed in any of the larger towns in the Province. In the smaller stations, however, it is almost universal, and the consequence is that when one house takes fire, the sparks from it kindle all the others, as a matter of course. Consequently, as an imperative measure of protection, every house is provided with a long hooked bamboo, called a mi-cheit, by means of which to pull off all the thatch as soon as a fire breaks out in the neighbourhood, and in

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776 769 were killed. They are called nat-sein. Advantage is taken of this to guard the capital. When a town is founded, at each of the four corners of the city walls and under the gate-posts people are buried alive. Their spirits thereafter hover about the place and bring disaster on strangers who come there with evil intentions. Monks and nuns who lead bad lives and break their vows are also believed to pass into demons when they die. There is therefore a constant and lamentable recruiting of the forces of the nats and tasés.

776 755 In some places certain nats have qualities ascribed to them which are not entirely obstructive and obnoxious. For example, in a nat's house at Nyaung-u, before the figure of a spirit called Apé Shwemyosin, lies a twisted, curious-shaped stone, which has magic powers ascribed to it. The sick come and try to lift it up. If they are successful they will soon recover health; if, on the other hand, its weight is too much for them, the inquirers will die. Similarly, on the ascent to Mandalay Hill there is a little chapel in which, besides three figures of the hentha, the Brahminy goose, each said to contain a sacred tooth brought from Ceylon, there is a flat, oval stone, with mystic characters inscribed on it. Many resort there to ascertain the probable issue of an intended journey or enterprise. If the stone proves heavy, the sign is bad.

● 781 The belief in spirits naturally induces a corresponding faith in omens. The Deitton, an astrological book constantly in the hands of Bedin Sayās, but carefully excluded from all monasteries, gives a great variety of them; auguries from the flight and number of birds seen, omens from the barking of dogs, the movements of bees, and the laying of eggs by fowls. Rules are given for choosing the site on which a house is to be built, and omens drawn from the substances found in digging the foundations. Posts are called male, female, or a-thet ma shi, neuter, according as they are of the same girth throughout, larger at the bottom or in the middle. Under ordinary circumstances, houses with female taing are fortunate, with neuter disastrous. Posts which are largest at the top are called taing bilu, "demon beams," and are especially unhappy.

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If a hen lays an egg upon a cloth, its owner will lose money. To come across mushrooms at the beginning of a journey is a most fortunate sign. A snake crossing the path always denotes delay, whether in a lawsuit, a journey, or a warlike expedition. If a dog carries an unclean thing up into his master's house, he may get thrashed for it, but the man will become rich; and so on in infinite variety.

All this belief in supernatural powers tends to produce abundance of experts who profess to be able to explain signs and to control the evil spirits. Every district possesses its nat thungè, or nat meimma, a spirit woman who dances at the nat feasts, and at ordinary times is consulted by the superstitious on all kinds of subjects connected with her trade. She is asked where so-and-so, lately deceased, is, to what seat of the world he has migrated; where absent persons are, and what they are doing; what facilities there are for special undertakings, and when they should be begun.

The Bedin Sayās claim similar knowledge, and are equally abundant. Numbers of them may be seen at any time of the day sitting under the trees on the way up to the Shwe Dagôn pagoda, writing and rubbing out figures and letters on their black note-books, and drawing a comfortable income from an unfailing succession of inquirers. Sometimes such a magic-worker, wishing to establish a reputation, or having a spite against somebody, performs the ceremony called pônnaga taikgyin. He carries off some cinders from the funeral pyres of people who have been burnt, and collecting a large assortment of such charred pieces of wood, puts them secretly in the house of the person whose feelings he wishes to work on. At night the spirits come and keep up a battery of stones on the unfortunate man's roof, all attempts to find out where the stones come from being as unavailing as they were in a similar instance in the suburbs of London not very long ago.

It is consolatory, however, to know that piety will protect any one from the attacks of malevolent spirits. Numerous stories told by the yahans prove the virtue of the gâtas to guard against evil. If the victim has only knowledge and strength of mind sufficient to recite these religious formulæ,

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243 and they are not the varieties most in favour with the Burmese for their own consumption—there are at least thirty different kinds. There is the byat sabā, the "tray" rice, which is considered the best, but, like most of the other sorts, will not stand the rough treatment of the steam mill-stones, and breaks in pieces. Then there is the myi-she, which has a long awn, and the myi-tôn, which has no awn at all; the taung-pyan, "winged rice," and the nga-chywè, "buffalo grain"; and so on through a long list, ending up with "black rice," which is not by any means bad eating. But of
527 all the kinds, kauk-hnyin, "sticky rice," is the variety always
262 used at the harvest feast. It is mixed with thin sliced cocoa-nut, sesamum seeds, ginger, onions, and pepper, all stirred together and well boiled; and the resulting mess is called tamanè. The rice is well named. It is very emphatically sticky, and even when taken alone is not very easily digested; but when it comes in the form of tamanè, the result is usually a widespread attack of colic throughout the village. This, however, comes after the festival, when the fun is all over, and does not concern us in any way.

574 When the farmer has made up his mind as to the day
527 on which he is going to have the feast—a date which, of
● [787] course, cannot be settled without consulting the wise men of the village and much pondering over the palm-leaf horoscope—he sends out a few boys with a number of packets of "pickled tea" to all the young men in the place, requesting them to be good enough to eat it and to come without fail that night to his homestead in order to help him to husk his rice for the tamanè hto-thi. A few girls are also asked to come; and they bring their friends for the sake of company, and the mothers follow for the sake of propriety. Thus there is quite a large assemblage at the farmer's when night falls and the business is to commence. There is a good deal of preliminary tea-drinking and smoking of cheroots and chewing of betel and le'hpet, and a great deal of laughing and talking. The girls profess to be astonished to find so many young men there; they had not imagined their host was meditating such extensive preparations, and thought there would be nobody there but his own and his wife's younger brothers. That is exactly what they will say next week

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805 is a movable feast, and the date of the commencement of the year was regularly fixed by the royal astrologers in Mandalay, who made a variety of intricate calculations, based on the position of various constellations. Since the annexation the duty of fixing the date of the new year has fallen on the Chief Secretary to the Local Government. The 805 object is to determine at what time the king of the tha-● 787 gyās will descend upon earth, for it is his arrival which will inaugurate the year. The Déwa king is fairly punctual, and the descent occurs always between the 9th and 12th of April. For some few years he has appeared on the 11th, and scoffers in Rangoon declare that he will probably continue to do so to save the pônnas trouble. These gentlemen annually draw up a thi'gyan sah, a kind of prophetic almanac for the year, relating what is likely to happen, and whether it will be prosperous or not. These vaticinations depend upon a variety of circumstances. The tha-gyā min may come down wielding a spear, when there will be disturbances in the land; a water-jar, when the rains will be abundant and the crops good, a torch or a simple staff.

It is from those objects that he bears with him, all of which are ascertained by previous inspection of the heavens and comparison with ancient precedents, that the astrologers are able to determine the exact time when the descent will be made. Other particulars are learned from the animals on which the nat-king rides. Sometimes he has a cow or a buffalo for a mount; at other times he bestrides a nagā, when there are sure to be very heavy rains; a galôn, on the other hand, presages violent squalls and atmospheric disturbances. When the tha-gyā min goes on foot with a lantern in his hand and shoes on his feet, it is a sign that the heat will be very great and prolonged. Besides this the king of the superior heavens, the Bumazonat, the spirit guardian of the earth, exercises also a considerable influence on the coming year, though he has nothing to do with its commencement. The pônnas, therefore, are at great pains to find out his exact position at the beginning of the month Tagu—whether in the trees, the flowers, or the paddy stubble. Each of these temporary habitations has its special signification, and the discovery of them is not only valuable

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in itself, but serves as a most satisfactory corroboration of the truth of the events prognosticated by the movements and surroundings of the tha-gyā king. The conclusions are all carefully noted down in the thi'gyan sa, and great piles of these are carefully preserved in the archives of the monkish library, seldom to be looked at again.

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Besides the events which are to happen in the coming year the astrologers are also able to determine whether the tha-gyā min will remain three days or four days upon earth. If he stays three days it is called a matulè year, if four, tawtulè, and the water-throwing is carried on a corresponding time.

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All these points are settled some time beforehand, so that every one in the remotest part of the country may have due notice, and then information is sent to the heads of monasteries, and the chief districts, and all is made ready to receive his nat-majesty with proper honours. When at last the day comes round, all are on the watch, and when the wise men give the signal, tha-gyā min kyabyi, the king has come down, a cannon is fired off, and forthwith all the people come out of doors with pots full of water, the mouths of the jars filled up with fresh green leaves and twigs of the sacred tha-bye tree. A formal prayer is said, and the water is poured out on the ground, and all are happy. Many years ago an event happened which singularly impressed true believers in the royal city. Just when expectation was at its highest and all ears were strained in expectation of the roar of the cannon, there was a terrific thunderclap, which made all the town quiver, and demonstrated the accuracy of the pônnas' calculations. There was no more thunder that night, and the ranks of the pious received great increase during the ensuing week. In country towns and villages every one who has a gun rushes out into the street at the appointed hour and fires it off. Most wonderful blunderbusses and old flintlocks and ancient rusty horse-pistols make their appearance, warranted to make a noise, but capable of little more. After this ceremony is over a few go to bed,—for the descent is usually made at midnight,—but the majority sit up and talk.

With the earliest glimmer of light all rise, and taking

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822 of some substance, which those who found it called a-yet hkè (congealed or solidified spirit), on the analogy of yè hkè (ice). How they came to try it I do not know; but after a while it was found out that this was the grand secret. A small fragment of this stuff proved thoroughly effectual in converting the baser metals into gold. No matter what it was tried on—tin, copper, lead, iron—the result was always satisfactory, and the discoverers travelled about the country for a time turning other people's scraps of metal into gold. Then the supply of the a-yet hkè ran out; and the great question is now where to get more of it. The invention of compressed beer created hope; but the acquisition of that article was disillusionising. It had not the magical properties of the a-yet khè, and it was not good to drink. There is here, perhaps, a promising field for sympathetic Western industry. It may be hoped that the wrecking of the ship had nothing to do with communicating its special virtue to the compressed spirit; otherwise we might have an alarming series of maritime disasters all round the Gulf of Martaban. Burning houses to get roast pig would be a trifle to this.

822 795 These are a few of the methods adopted, and they may be taken as samples of them all. None of them are more scientific, and the three I have described enjoy the reputation of being entirely successful in the right hands. But the practice is much discountenanced by the pious. Alchemy is specially denounced by the Lord Buddha. It tends to induce covetousness; and the striving is in itself the best evidence of a love for the things of this world, which incapacitate a man for the contemplative states of zān and arups—how much more, then, for ne'ban. The monks, the Assembly of the Perfect, of course denounce it; for, in addition to the consulting of horoscopes—itself, though universal (the pôngyi himself had one drawn up when he was a week old), a Brahminical practice, and remote from true Buddhism—there are numerous other observances connected with alchemy which are still more heretical. In addition to consulting his 822 787 sadā for a lucky hour, the alchemist frequently also obtains omens through the augurs from the bones of a sacrificial fowl. It is arranged that the thigh bones of a chicken shall

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be examined. A condition is imposed that the bones shall exactly correspond, or that there shall be certain defined differences. The hollows of the tendons, for example, shall be like or unlike, the bones shall be even or uneven, and so on. This being accurately settled, the bones are, after the chanting of bedin, and cabalistic spells, held up side by side, and critically examined. An experienced eye is necessary to read the result properly, and interpret the full signification of the omens. Fortunately, or unfortunately, as you like to take it, if there are two augurs present, they almost always differ, and the intending experimenter is left free to follow the opinion that he approves of, or which fits in best with his plans. This superstition, besides being abhorrent in itself, on account of the taking of life, is particularly objectionable to the mendicants, as implying that there are others besides themselves commanding respect and receiving reverence. The openly avowed alchemists are therefore a much abused body. But they have the consolation of knowing that almost every Burman has tried his hand at eggayat htothi and failed. There are very many monasteries where experiments have been made notwithstanding theoretical denunciations.

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The following are a few prescriptions for whitlow and bad sores from a Maulmein doctor's books :—

1. The "hand" of a tauk-tè, the big trout-spotted gekko, that haunts old trees and the thatch of houses ; or, more probably, a bit of the stem of an epiphyte called the tauk-tè's hand.
2. Sulphur.
3. The bulb of a white lily.
4. A chilli roasted.
5. Cock's dung.

Mix in equal parts, and stir while heating it, and finally add some earth oil.

Again : Take a sufficient quantity of cock's dung, add to it a small quantity of copperas, pound them well together, and then mix with earth oil and some sesamum oil.

Seven or eight dry seeds of dankwè (*Cassia fœtida*), well bruised, and then intimately mixed with a little congee (rice water), with "sufficient" earth oil added, also proves a very effective remedy.

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The bedin sayā's books are partly written, partly filled, with magic figures and pictures. The squares are all formed in accordance with the ordinary Hindoo law. When the wise man is asked questions, he keeps writing down numbers and characters on his parabaik tablets and rubbing them out, chanting to himself all the time. Sometimes he shakes cowries and seeds together, and when they fall out, decides from their position which of the pictures or rhymes in his book is to be consulted. Each of these gives its own answer, but they are not always as definite in their character as is desirable. The sayā always speaks in the declamatory monotone of the linga.

The following are the names of some of the familiar spirits and their likenesses :—

Upadana Pyuda, a spirit who lives under the earth and protects the husbandman. When he comes above ground he rides on a serpent. The inquiring farmer whose cowrie refers to this picture is most fortunate.

Sadi Wazadat, a wild figure galloping on a horse. This means failure of the attempt.

Saka Bada, a monkey mounted on a goat. Denotes fertility of mind.

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In another picture a crow is represented breaking a vessel full of money with its beak. Close at hand are a man and woman embracing one another. This denotes loss.

A man and his wife represented dancing together signify great gifts to the pagoda.

Another picture, which represents a husband and wife standing together in front of a house, with a horse and cow near it, denotes that the child to whom this picture may refer will be a farmer.

Near the picture of a dog, which one man holds by the tail while another hits it on the head, is written: "When the lot falls here, be not boastful, but humble; avoid pride and assumption, for that will only raise up enemies for you."

The following are some spells:—

Take this amulet (a piece of bone carved rudely square, and with mystic figures on it), put your foot up against a thabye tree, and repeat the Ittipithaw (a form of worship in learning which one spends four or five months in the monasteries) thirty-seven times. Then you will be able to turn any given man into a ghost and make him do as you please.

Take the stalk of a betel leaf in your hand. Repeat "Ôm padan rupa wari thwa ha" seven times, and then throw the stalk at the person. He or she is sure then to listen to what you say.

The following is a charm to cause a dream about your lady-love:—Get an exact likeness of her made. Find out the hour and day on which she was born, her name and exact age. Then having begged permission from the guardian spirit of both the houses (your own and hers), chant as follows: "O Thurathadi, fairest goddess of flowers, daughter of nats most high, grant most graciously all that I desire of thee: tasa machan: without keeping back the least remainder; without withdrawing a single joy: prithee do this without fail, sweet goddess of woodland love." Repeat this seven times before the figure. Then go to sleep.

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suffering no one to enter till he came to the person decided by fate to rule the country, usually some one of the royal lineage, or of some other princely line, who had wandered or been carried off from court. Then the horse waited patiently till the sleeper should wake up; the tales always represent the prince as asleep when the chariot arrives. When he rouses himself he steps into the chariot, and without guidance, the horse forthwith gallops back to the palace and the tabindaing finds a husband and the country a king. Alompra became sovereign, only in a slightly different way, but his descent from Mahā Thamada must be unimpeachable.

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Long before he took up arms and won for himself the throne, the soothsayers saw about him signs that betokened his coming dignity. When he slept his arms shone like fire; vultures perched on the houses of his enemies; gorgeous butterflies and gay-plumaged birds and strange animals entered his dwelling; he dug up an ancient image of the Buddha not far from his doorstep; when he came to fight it was manifest that he was favoured even beyond the great men of old. He possessed a sword that flew through the air and cut off heads; his shoes enabled him to clear miles at a stride; his fairy spear could spit a whole line of soldiers at once; his javelin could be hurled to any distance; finally, as a fifth weapon, he had a gun which never missed its mark, and was brought down to him by a thagyā. The possession of these five weapons at once proved his right to the throne and secured his holding it. It is true that some of the omens which signalised his right have appeared in others with very different result. A Karen minlaung, or embryo king, displayed the same fire-streaming arms, and raised a rebellion since the British occupation of Pegu. He gained a considerable following, and seemed formidable for a time, till the English wise men pointed out that the fiery glow was produced by rubbing phosphorus on his skin. Then all went against him as an impostor, and he very soon vanished into the hill-country. Similarly, in 1858, a poor fisherman at Twante, a large village not far from Rangoon, dragged up in his net a small image of the Buddha. Such discoveries are always looked upon as an omen of high

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destiny, and according to the common superstition, the fisherman believed that he would rise in dignity, restore the Talaing kingdom, and revive religion. He announced the supernatural call in the village bazaar. A few desperate characters joined him, took possession of the town, and issued a proclamation calling upon all the faithful to rally to his standard. But the British civil authorities stepped in and broke up the procession which was going in solemn state to the pagoda to inaugurate and consecrate the fisherman in his new profession. The claimant of royal honours escaped at the time, but was afterwards given up by the villagers. In each of these cases there was deception or misapprehension of the meaning of the omens, but the abundance of the signs in the case of Alompra disposes of the assertion that he was a mere adventurer. He himself thoroughly believed in his high destiny, and talked of it in right royal fashion to Captain Baker, an ambassador sent to him in 1755 by the Honourable East India Company. This gentleman, the commander of an East Indiaman, who, under the instructions of his employers, evidently regarded the great conqueror as little better than a savage, brought him a present of a chest or two of gunpowder, a couple of muskets and carbines, a gilt looking-glass, some red earth in bags, and half a dozen bottles of lavender water (there is no mention of glass beads), and offered Alompra the assistance of the great company. Whereupon his majesty burst into a defiant laugh and replied in the following fashion: "Have I asked, or do I want any assistance to reduce my enemies to subjection? Let none conceive such an opinion! Have I not in three years' time extended my conquests three months' journey in every quarter without the help of cannon or muskets? Nay, I have with bludgeons only, opposed and defeated these Peguans who destroyed the capital of this kingdom, and took the prince prisoner; and a month hence I intend to go with a great force to Dagôn (Rangoon), where I have an army now lying, when I will advance to the walls of Pegu, blockade and starve them out of it, which is the last town I have now to take to complete my conquest, and then I will go in quest of Bourno (the French governor of Syriam, whom he afterwards actually did put to

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death). Captain, see this sword; it is now three years since it has been constantly exercised in chastising my enemies; it is indeed almost blunt with use; but it shall be continued to the same till they are utterly dispersed. Do not talk of assistance. I require none. The Peguans I can wipe away as thus (drawing the palm of one hand over the other). See these arms and this thigh (drawing his loose coat-sleeve up to the armpit, and lifting his pasoh, so as to display a bare tattooed leg); amongst a thousand you cannot see my match. I can crush a hundred such as the King of Pegu." (Quoted from Crawford.)

Two years later he talked to Ensign Lester in the same bombastic strain, telling him that he would go to Madras, and that if a nine-pounder shot was to hit him it could do him no harm, with a good deal more to the same effect. He is described at this time, when he was about forty-five years of age, as five feet eleven in height, and of a powerful build, with a long, but not a thin face, the expression not being improved by a number of smallpox pitmarks. He had a broad but very retreating forehead, a characteristic shared by all his descendants, and prominent in the case of King Mindôn.

Alaungpaya, then, was no feeble founder of the present line of successors to the great Mahā Thamada. He certainly had the power to command, and his military successes carried the peacock flag from far away towards Dacca, down to the Siamese capital. Assuredly he was a worthy follower of the great first king, and the Burmese believed firmly in the unbroken character of the succession. Accordingly all the old Indian and Sakyan customs were carefully observed by the Burmese royal family. Such were the marriage with half-sisters, and the consequent preserving unmarried of the king's eldest daughter; the reverence of the three most excellent animals, the peacock of the sun, the hare of the moon, and the kalawaik, the carrying bird of Vishnu, whose eyes like jewels look friendly on the stranger; and the beit-theit, the consecration by pouring out of water at the accession. Marriage with half-sisters was only allowed to the king, not to the people at large, or even to the princes of the blood-royal. The throne was painted over with representations of

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sanctifying a building with human sacrifices is a notion which has prevailed in all parts of the world at different times, and instances of horrors of the kind are not unknown in Europe.

The virtue of the sacrifices only lasts a certain time, and when it is gone a new city should be built. There are certain signs, added to public disasters, which point out to the initiated when this alteration of site should take place. Mandalay was commenced in 1858, and two years later the seat of government was transferred from Amarapura, some five or six miles down the river. When the foundations of the city wall were laid, fifty-two persons of both sexes, and of various age and rank, were consigned to a living tomb. Three were buried under each of the twelve city gates, one at each of the four corners, one under each of the palace gates, and at the corners of the timber stockade, and four under the throne itself. The selection had to be made with care, for the victims were required to be representative people, born on special days of the week, and the boys buried were not to have any tattoo marks on them, the girls not to have their ears bored. When it was known that the troops were making the collection, no one was to be seen about the streets, except in great bands in the middle of the day. The government gave a series of magnificent dramatic performances, but no one went to see them. Eventually, however, the tale was made up, and the building went on apace. Along with the four human beings buried at the

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corners of the city were placed four jars full of oil, carefully covered over and protected from any damage that might come from the weight of earth pressing down upon them. These were examined every seven years by the royal astrologers, and as long as they remained intact the town was considered safe.

At the third examination in 1880, however, it was found that the oil in two of the jars was either completely dried up or had leaked out. One was pretty far gone, and the fourth alone remained in a tolerably satisfactory state. At this very time, the January and February of 1880, a terrible scourge of smallpox was decimating the town, and two of the royal house, King Thibaw's infant son, his only child,

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and the ex-Pagān Min, the cock-fighting king, had fallen victims. This was bad enough, but other signs portending evil had happened. One of the most valued of the crown jewels, the Nansin Baddamya, had disappeared, a huge ruby, cherished as emblematic of the fortune of the dynasty since the days of Alaungpaya. A tiger in the royal gardens escaped from his cage, a most ominous circumstance, not for the poor wretch whom he killed and half ate before he could be recaptured, but for the city and the entire kingdom. The appearance of wild animals in a town is a sign that it will speedily turn to a wilderness. It was the discovery of a tiger and some deer in the environs of Amarapura which decided the fate of that "City of the Immortals." All these circumstances, coupled with the outward and visible sign of the wrath of the spirits in the shape of the plague of small-pox, decided the pônnas at once. It was no use filling the jars with oil again, or putting in fresh ones. Such parsimonious measures would be considerably worse than useless. A full conclave of the astrologers voted by a large majority for the change of the capital. This, however, neither the ministers nor Thibaw Min would hear of. Mandalay is very different from Amarapura and Ava. There are too many solid brick houses and mills and public manufactories —none of them working, it is true, but too costly to be abandoned—in the present capital to admit of its being thrown over in the old casual way, when a royal order forced everybody to migrate, on pain of imprisonment or death. The pônnas therefore held another meeting, and it was decided that the only other alternative was the offering of propitiatory sacrifices. At the instance of the Pônna Wun, a truculent old villain, it was resolved that the number should be the highest possible: a hundred men, a hundred women, a hundred boys, a hundred girls, a hundred soldiers, and a hundred foreigners. This the king agreed to, and a royal mandate was signed, and arrests forthwith commenced. A frightful panic spread in Mandalay after the first day. Every steamer leaving the capital was crowded to suffocation, boats went down the river in dozens, and there seemed very possibility that Mandalay would be deserted. Then the ministers took fright at the indignation which the

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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644 631 782 announced massacres caused in England, and the whole thing was countermanded and denied. But upwards of a hundred people had been arrested, and some of these, when liberated months afterwards, declared that in the dark nights of terror, when no one ventured about Mandalay streets, people were buried under each of the posts at the twelve gates, as a compromise between the fear of the spirits and the fear that the English troops would cross the frontier. 644 787 Each of these posts bears an image of an animal from one of the seals of the king, and before the post sits a figure of a bilu, with a thick club, to act as watchman, in case the human guard should go to sleep. As Burman sentries generally sleep sounder than other people, the propitiation of these spirits at any rate was a very imperative precaution. Whether the oil-jars were filled and reburied *alone* is a dark mystery. But the smallpox left Mandalay, and the place is as happy as ever it was, which, however, is not saying much.

644 361 177.36 The British town of Mandalay is very different from that described. The Palace stockade has gone, and with it very many of the suites of apartments, notably in the women's quarter. The Hall of Audience for a time was converted into a Tamil Mission chapel; the Hlutdaw into a hideous collection of clerks' offices. This has been changed owing to the indignant protests of English visitors. Most of the Palace Halls are now empty: even the Upper Burma Club has been turned out.

The old City has now become cantonments with a few scattered barracks, officers' quarters, and wide stretches of grass. What formerly constituted the suburbs is now Mandalay town. The former execrable roads are now among the best in Burma. But many of the notable buildings, the elaborate monasteries, and gilt shrines have been burnt. Mandalay is certainly a dwindling town; the only question is how long it will remain the second town in Burma.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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805

Friday, Thaukkya (from Thaukkya, Venus); Saturday, Sané (from Thawri, Saturn). The selection of the planets to denote the days of the week by races so different now, whatever they may originally have been, as the Chinese, Scandinavians, Greeks, and all the Mohammedan tribes, is singular.

For ordinary purposes the day and the night are divided into four periods of three hours each: from six to nine, which is called ta-chetti, the first watch, one blow; twelve o'clock, the next quarter, is announced by hni'-chetti, the second watch, two blows; three o'clock, thôn-chetti, the third watch, three blows; and six, le-chetti, the fourth watch, four blows. These hours were sounded in Mandalay by alternate beating on a huge gong and drum placed in the clock-tower by the eastern gate; and at le-chetti, sundown or sunrise, the palace gates were closed, or opened, as the case might be. Noon is styled môn, and midnight tha'gaung; and the word byan is added in the sense of the English P.M. Thus nayi byan thôn-chetti would be 3 P.M.

In English territory of course the English system has been adopted, and now prevails over the whole country, Upper and Lower. For astronomical purposes, such as the casting of the horoscope and the calculations for fortunate days and the like, an exceedingly elaborate scale exists, but it is never made use of in ordinary life, though references to it in religious books are not uncommon. The unit is a naya. This is the period of time in which ten flashes of lightning may take place, or the time it takes to wink the eye ten times, or to throw out the arm as often. [787]

4	Naya	are equivalent to one	Kanā, an "instant."
12	Kanā	" "	Kayā.
10	Kayā	" "	Pyan.
6	Pyan	" "	Bizana.
15	Bizana	" "	Pad.
4	Pad	" "	Nayi, an "hour."
60	Nayi	" "	Yet, a day and night.
15	Yet	" "	Bekkha, or side (of the moon) a half month.
2	Bekkha	" "	La, a month.
12	La	" "	Hnit, a year.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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825 baby curled up together in a corner with the boa, making one another mutually cosy.

[757] The gall-bladder and fat of the sabba-gyi are much prized for medicinal purposes, the fat especially being esteemed as a sovereign remedy for rheumatism and strains.

Of the poisonous snakes the most dreaded is the ngan, or u-gwet, the "spotted forehead." This creature, the hamadryad or ophiophagus, is, as his name imports, a cannibal, and lives on his neighbour snakes. Specimens as long as nine feet from nose to tail have been killed near Rangoon, and in the forests which are his proper home he sometimes grows to fourteen or fifteen feet. Unlike all other reptiles, the ngan does not get out of the way of a man approaching his haunts, but attacks him immediately. He is worse than the walrus that roused the indignation of the French poet.

Bees are kept in a good many places in the country, but it is necessary to be very careful where you put the hives. It is a most ill-omened circumstance if wild bees make a nest under the house, or if bees of any kind fly under the floor. On the other hand, a hive on the house-top is very lucky. Honey is in great request to present to the pôngyis at various feasts, and especially for the embalming of the [764] body of a dead brother of the Robe. After the cremation the honey is sold in the bazaar. It is not eaten by Englishmen in Burma. "Tapping the governor" does not commend itself to everybody. The hill tribes in the Shan States keep bees in hives made of blocks of wood.

757 Rhinoceros horns are in as great favour with the Burmans as with Chinese medical men. Shavings of the horn are considered an invaluable cure for epilepsy, and also guard against poisons of all kinds. There are two distinct species found in the eastern forests—the single and the double-horned.

315 ● 787 Near Yenangyaung, in the petroleum district, when a new oil-well is wanted, the workmen place a marble image of an elephant on a smooth, flat stone, and surround it with gifts of all kinds, and then sit down to watch. If the elephant itself moves it indicates the direction in which borings are to be made; if not, the offering on which its shadow first falls as the sun sinks down, is marked, and a bedin sayā consulted.

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occasionally want to shift shoulders. When they do so an earthquake is the result. Others declare that the quaking of the earth is caused by gusts of wind on the under surface of the world. The idea is that the solid mass of the earth is supported on a double thickness of water, and this again by twice its thickness of air, below which is a vacuum, occasionally, however, disturbed by storms. The Buddha gave a much more extensive explanation to his favourite disciple Ananda. "My son," he said, "eight causes make the earth tremble. First, the earth lies on a mass of water, which rests on the air, and the air on space; when the air is set in motion, it shakes the water, which in its turn shakes the earth; second, any being gifted with extraordinary powers; third, the conception of a payā laung for his last existence; fourth, his birth; fifth, his becoming a Buddha; sixth, his preaching the Law of the Wheel; seventh, his mastering and renouncing existence; eighth, his obtaining the state of Ne'ban. These are the eight causes of earthquakes."

The Law of the Wheel is the doctrine of the four great truths: pain, the production of pain, the destruction of pain, and the way leading to that destruction. These constantly revolve upon themselves, and the manifestation of these truths is the great work a Buddha has to perform.

Omens are drawn from the appearance of the sun and moon, and especially from the particular constellation which presides over one's birth. The howling of dogs, the flight and song of birds, the appearance of any strange creature, or of a wild animal in an unexpected place, all have their special meaning. So have the nervous twitchings of the eye, or of any part of the body. If the sun or any of the planets approaches the moon there is danger about. In the four months when Venus is not to be seen, in a month when there is an earthquake or an eclipse, and on the first or last day of a month, it is advisable not to cut one's hair, marry, build a house, or begin any important business whatever. These and hundreds more may be found in the Deitton, a book very full of singular information. Palmistry is a science of which every educated person professes to have more or less knowledge. The less a man knows, the more truculent his deductions are.

of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will 'arouse or stir the blood.' 846

Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their presence proves that the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, traditionally indicated a royal future; today, however, in the absence of royalty in Burma, such marks merely forecast a 'great' future for the child. 787 845

A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations. 775

Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as the child's, from earlier existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them. 854 751

A number of things are done by parents to protect the newborn baby from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a tiger bone should be ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions; some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife similarly placed is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain prayers have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. People should refrain from making admiring remarks about a baby's growth; if they do so, the thread may be left on the baby's wrists to neutralize the harm that may come.

When the stump of the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes. [846]

A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during the nursing period. Certain observances are necessary. The mother must not eat tomatoes at this time, for they may appear in the baby's stools; for the same reason, she must abstain from green vegetables. Any falling out of her hair during the nursing stage is said to be caused by bubbles blown into her by the suckling baby. To prevent the milk supply from drying up, the nursing mother avoids fruits of astringent quality, such as pomegranates and buds of the banyan. She must also take care not to allow milk to fall on the floor and dry. 853

The baby is weaned very gradually, beginning at the age of about nine months to a year in most cases, although some children may be given the breat occasionally up to the age of two or three years. Weaning is facilitated by the mother's application of a bitter substance to her breasts. 862

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

One of the vows that monks take is never to have any dealings with charms or with the supernatural, and so Buddhism cannot even give such little assistance to its believers as to furnish them with charms. If they have charms, it is against their faith; it is a falling away from the purity of their teachings; it is simply the innate yearning of man to the supernatural, to the mysterious. Man's passions are very strong, and if he must fight, he must also have a charm to protect him in fight. If his religion cannot give it him, he must find it elsewhere. You see that, as the teachings of the Buddha have never been able to be twisted so as to permit war directly, neither have they been able to assist indirectly by furnishing charms, by making the fighter bullet-proof. And I thought then of the little prayer and the cross that were so certain a defence against hurt.

We talked for a long time in the waning moonlight by the ruddy fire, and at last we broke up to go to bed. As we rose a voice called to us across the water from the little promontory. In the still night every word was as clear as the note of a gong.

'Sleep well,' it cried — 'sleep well — sle-e-ep we-l-l.'

We all stood astonished — those who did not know Burmese wondering at the voice; those who did, wondering at the meaning. The sentries peered keenly towards the sound.

'Sleep well,' the voice cried again; 'eat well. It will not be for long. Sleep well while you may.'

And then, after a pause, it called the governor's

16:Fielding Hall G-8 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

down become green again, than an elect guilty of such pride be restored to his holy station. Take care for yourself that you do not give way to such an excess.'

Is not this teaching the very reverse of that of all other peoples and religions? Can you imagine the religious teachers of any other religion being warned to keep themselves free from visions? Are not visions and trances, dreams and imaginations, the very proof of holiness? But here it is not so. These are vain things, foolish imaginations, and he who would lead the pure life must put behind him all such things as mere dram-drinking of the soul.

This is a most wonderful thing, a religion that condemns all mysticisms. It stands alone here amongst all religions, pure from the tinsel of miracle, either past, or present, or to come. And yet this people is, like all young nations, given to superstition: its young men dream dreams, its girls see visions. There are interpreters of dreams, many of them, soothsayers of all kinds, people who will give you charms, and foretell events for you. Just as it was with us not long ago, the mystery, *what is* beyond the world, exercises a curious fascination over them. Everywhere you will meet with traces of it, and I have in another chapter told some of the principal phases of these. But the religion has kept itself pure. No hysteric visions, no madman's dreams, no clever conjurer's tricks, have ever shed a tawdry glory on the monkhood of the Buddha. Amid all the superstition round about them they have remained pure, as they have from passion and desire. Here in the far East, the very home, we

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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think, of the unnatural and superhuman, the very cradle of the mysterious and the wonderful, is a religion which condemns it all, and a monkhood who follow their religion. Does not this out-miracle any miracle?

With other faiths it is different: they hold out to those who follow their tenets and accept their ministry that in exchange for the worldly things which their followers renounce they shall receive other gifts, heavenly ones; they will be endued with power from above; they will have authority from on high; they will become the chosen messengers of God; they may even in their trances enter into His heaven, and see Him face to face.

Buddhism has nothing of all this to offer. A man must surrender all the world, with no immediate gain. There is only this: that if he struggle along in the path of righteousness, he will at length attain unto the Great Peace.

A monk who dreamed dreams, who said that the Buddha had appeared to him in a vision, who announced that he was able to prophesy, would be not exalted, but expelled. He would be deemed silly or mad; think of that—mad—for seeing visions, not holy at all! The boys would jeer at him; he would be turned out of his monastery.

A monk is he who observes purity and sanity of life. Hysteric dreams, the childishness of the mysterious, the insanity of the miraculous, are no part of that.

And so a monk has to put behind him everything that is called good in this life, and govern his body and his soul in strict temperance.

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER IV

U PON NYA

1. The Life of U Pon Nya

U Pon Nya was born about the year 1807. His father was a minor nobleman at the court of Prince Tharrawaddy, a younger brother of King Bagyidaw (who lost the war against the British), and the young boy was brought up under the patronage of the prince. He was a precocious child and was placed under the tutorship of the most learned monk of the day. The prince rebelled against his brother and became king in 1837. U Pon Nya, in the meantime, had become a monk. During the rebellion, his father fell fighting for the prince, and the new king wanted U Pon Nya to take his father's office, but the future dramatist preferred to remain a monk. King Tharrawaddy continued to consider himself as godfather to U Pon Nya, who therefore was in constant contact with the court. On the death of that king, his son Pagan ascended the throne, and U Pon Nya left the capital for the little town of Salè, where he began to compose literary essays in about 1847. His essays and lyrics became immensely popular, and he came to be known all over the country as the 'Master of Salè', by which name he is more commonly referred to. In 1850 he became a layman again, and was appointed a court poet at the court of Prince Kanaung, a brother of the reigning king, Pagan. In 1851 Burma went to war again with the British and lost some more territory. Prince Kanaung and his other brother, Mindon, rebelled against the half-mad king. Mindon became the new king and made peace with the British. Kanaung became the crown prince, and U Pon Nya his official poet. He was then already recognized by the nation as the foremost poet, scholar and essayist of the day. He wrote astrological works and won further fame as an astrologer. He believed that he was liable to die on the scaffold and asked for a proclamation by the king exempting him from punishment by death; otherwise he begged to leave the court for the monastery. The required proclamation was made.

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
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quite frequently help in rearing their grandchildren, telling them stories and teaching them the Buddhist scriptures.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Birth and Infancy. When a woman is pregnant her dreams are considered especially significant. She is expected to remember those of her dreams that concern what her child will be like. The welfare of the child is forecast by some dreams: a dream of only one of things that normally are paired, such as earrings, bodes ill, possibly death, of the child in infancy; a dream of her viscera coming out indicates a great future for the child. Persistent dreams of a particular deceased individual are indicative of whose reincarnation the child will represent. In all forebodings of ill the normal counter-measure is to consult a Buddhist monk or an astrologer, who may give the prospective mother an inscribed *mantra* (prayer) to keep or some amulet for the child to wear as protection.

Although the Burmese woman need not avoid any specific foods during her pregnancy, strong spices are regarded as harmful.

No supernatural means are employed to influence the sex of the prospective offspring. Certain signs are considered prognosticative: if the pregant woman's stomach is pointed, a boy will be born, whereas a broad, flat stomach indicates a girl is in prospect.

Pregnancy among the Burmese is considered a time of great happiness; the woman is greatly indulged and pampered by all concerned.

When the time for delivery approaches any other pregnant women in the household must depart, lest their presence impede labor. Usually the woman's mother, grandmother, or aunt, in addition to a midwife, assists at birth. A fire is prepared in the room in which delivery is to take place and is maintained for ten days.

As soon as delivery has occurred, the umbilical cord is cut with a bamboo knife. The afterbirth is wrapped in the new mother's skirt and is buried at once in the cardinal direction associated with the day of the week of the baby's birth. The mother is fed an infusion of turmeric, and turmeric paste is rubbed all over her body. She is kept close to the nearby fire and made very warm. For three days she is carefully watched to prevent her from sleeping heavily in daylight hours.

The new mother is treated as a delicate invalid for about a month and, in some cases, for as long as three months. She is fed only white rice and dried fish. A soup of garlic and banana stems is drunk to promote the flow of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will "arouse or stir the blood."

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
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787 826 Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their presence proves the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, indicate a royal future; today, however, with no royalty in Burmese society, such marks merely forecast a "great" future for the child.

775 826 A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations.

Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as that of the child, from previous existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

845 Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them.

766 In the event of a stillborn baby, the corpse is given special treatment. It is kept in a case, clothed and powdered, and a tray of food is set in front of it every day. It is considered auspicious to care for a stillborn child in this manner: the spirits will guide the parents in their dreams toward the attainment of material prosperity.

751 854 [825] [753] For the normal baby who survives, a number of things are done by Burmese parents to protect it from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a tiger bone is ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions; some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife placed under the baby's mattress is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain *mantras* have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. Should a baby be admired by people for its growth, the thread may be left on to neutralize the harm that is believed to result from such expressions.

[278] When the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes.

000 A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
APl Burma
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mony, but in actual practice this often takes place as early as her seventh or eighth year. Since this is a feast occasion involving considerable expense to her family, there is a tendency to hold a single ceremony, at which perhaps a pubescent girl, together with her younger sisters or cousins, will all have their ears bored. On the same occasion male children of approximately the same age may be initiated into the Buddhist monkhood.[5]

The girl initiate is dressed for the occasion in the traditional garb of the Burmese court, and in addition she wears a spired-helmet type of head dress. The villagers gather at her family's house for the event. An elderly woman rubs an anaesthetic plant substance on the girl's ear lobes and pierces them with gold pins. The pins are left in the ears, bent back. Later, if larger holes are desired, rolled leaves may be inserted. The family presents gifts to the assembled guests; often these are conventionalized tokens, such as inscribed cigars and fans.

Courtship and Marriage. Young people in the villages find ample opportunities to assess each other's manners, physical appearance, and personality in the company of others, at feasts and various gatherings. If a young man and woman are together apart from the company of others it is assumed that sex relations are involved. In fact, such going together is spoken of as "getting married." The Burmese find it hard to conceive of a young unmarried couple associating on a purely friendly, non-sexual basis: such behavior would be regarded as contrary to nature. However, unchaperoned association is disapproved and does not occur very frequently.

Once a pair have decided they wish to marry, the boy will inform his parents of his desire. They will already know, especially in the smaller villages, of the standing of the girl's family and of her dowry potentialities; in fact, as soon as they have sensed their son's interest in a particular girl they will take steps to acquire this information. They will also ascertain whether acceptance by the girl's family is likely. In a small community the approach may be made directly by the boy's parents. In larger centers a female go-between is more likely to be employed. The boy's parents will be informed by the girl's family that the decision must await the outcome of consultation with an astrologer concerning the compatibility of the birth dates of the prospective bride and groom. If the marriage is found to be an auspicious one—which it will usually be found to be if the girl's parents desire the match—an affirmative answer will be relayed to the boy's parents. The latter will then call upon her parents and in the presence of elders, not necessarily related to either family, formally ask for the girl's hand.

5 Description of the boy's initiation ceremony is being reserved for a separate publication.

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
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584 From this moment the couple are considered betrothed, and must not go about in public unchaperoned.

● [787] The wedding date is astrologically determined. The length of the engagement period depends upon the availability of an auspicious wedding date. Generally speaking, lengthy engagements are disliked. In no case should an engagement carry over the Buddhist "Lent."

585 Before the wedding ceremony, the bride's house is open to friends and relatives, who are expected to drop in to help prepare the house for the wedding, lending household items that may be needed for the occasion. A pavilion adjoining the house is erected to accommodate the crowd that will attend. All the helpers and would-be helpers in this work are offered meals and light refreshments.

The bride's family normally bears all the expenses of these preparations, but sometimes the boy's family will mention a sum of money either as a contribution toward the wedding or as an indication of their son's ability to support a wife. If such funds are forthcoming, they will mention them at the time they ask for the girl's hand.

One room in the girl's house is set aside as the bridal chamber. In families of average or better financial means it is furnished with a bed, draperies, and complete toilet and dressing facilities. In poorer families that cannot afford to furnish the bridal chamber in elaborate fashion, some show of style will be made in furnishing the bed at least. By the evening before the wedding day the room must be ready, with all the wedding gifts on display.

On the wedding day three or four intimate married friends of the girl dress her. This must not be done by widows or divorcees, for it would bode ill for the marriage. For unmarried girls to perform this task would be immodest. Neither should a pregnant woman dress the bride, for this would be bad for her baby. The dressing of the bride begins sufficiently early for her to be ready at the astrologically-determined wedding hour.

The bridegroom's party arrives just prior to the appointed time for the ceremony. It includes two of his bachelor friends as well as his family. He takes his seat on a cushion on the platform that has been specially erected for the ceremony. The bride is brought out by her matrons, and approaches with her eyes downcast. She takes her seat on a cushion on the bridegroom's left. Across the platform, from left to right, are placed three silver offering bowls. A fourth bowl, on the right hand edge of the platform, contains puffed rice. The bride-

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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88. METHILA ON THE ROUND FOR SUN.

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struggles. Apart from this and the serfdom referred to at p. 32, slavery has only played a subordinate *rôle* in Burma within historic times. The *payadyún*, and they alone, are treated as outcasts by both of these populations. They beg for alms and also appropriate the offerings brought to the shrines in profusion at festivals. Their right to beg is admitted, although they frequently accumulate money and build fine houses.

Lepers (*anû*) in many cases quit their families of their own accord and settle in the *payadyún* colony. In some places they were compelled to do so. The settlements have thus acquired the semblance of leper colonies. There are a few country villages of this character. Indigent lepers beg for alms. In 1891 there were 6,000 lepers in Burma, the highest ratio in the Indian Empire. There are now four leper asylums. Casual mendicancy is almost unknown in Burma.

[735]

The Burman and Brahman soothsayers (p. 158) are regular frequenters of the shrines. The Burman astrologer (*hedín-sayá*) casts horoscopes on the Brahman model (No. 279) and designates the days auspicious for undertakings. He takes his name from proficiency in reckoning, and is consulted about business calculations that cannot be done mentally.

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The Buddhist duty-days (*âbôt-ne, thadín*) follow the quarters of the moon. They are kept regularly during lent. On these days the pious laity of both sexes and sedate years observe the rule of *pôthudaw* and *mèthilá* from sunrise to sunrise (*âbôt-saung*). They adopt sober attire, or else white cotton clothing, which is considered the plainest of any. In the forenoon men and women separately repair to the temple rest-houses, whither food for the morning meal, which has been collected the previous evening from religious donors

[785]

89. SOOTHSAYER.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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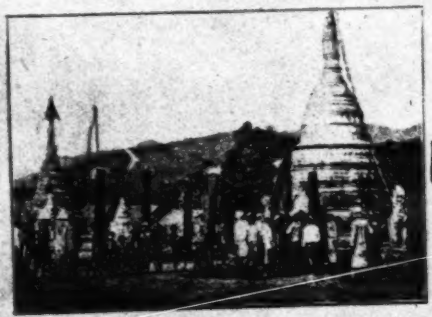
122. CUTTING GIANT BAMBOO (WABO).

and the roof-rafters. Straight trees are selected for posts, and are either left plain, or the sapwood is dressed off, or they are dubbed octagonal; the timbers are rough-hewn with the *dâ*. Posts of hard and durable wood (*pyinkadó*) are also squared, and the scantlings for the timbers cut with the saw. A special significance attaches to the posts of the house. It is thought unlucky if birds alight on them before they are roofed in. Sham bows and arrows are set at the heads of the posts to scare them (*hugemmana*). Besides the miniature bow-and-arrow stuck in bazár goods to scare crows, this is the only form in which the long-bow and arrow survive in Burma; in practice, arrows are used with a crossbow (No. 204) and pellets with the plain bow (*le*), and that not extensively. Another curious custom is the one of laying a piece of cloth between the head of the post and the wall-plate as a propitiation to the *nat* of the tree (p. 187). Before the large posts of temples are reared, their heads are hung with offerings, which the workpeople afterwards share among themselves. The front bays of the house have a floor only a few feet off the ground (*kyanntìng*)—unless where the flood-levels require it to be higher—making a verandah, the common or unenclosed portion of the house, free to strangers. The back bays have a floor about four cubits off the ground or above the lower floor. A bamboo or wooden ladder connects the floors. The upper floor is enclosed all round, and has one or two bays partitioned off. A pent-roof covers the cooking-place and grain-bin, where the rice-pounders and implements are stored as well; or else there is a shed for



123. REARING THE POSTS OF THE WUT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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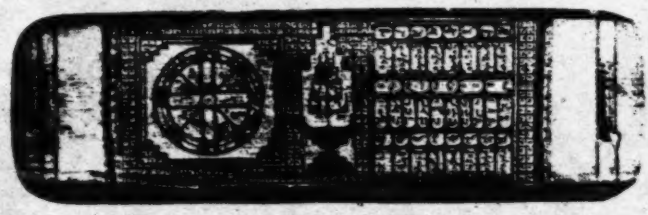
759
757

278. SHAMPOOING (A-HNEIK).

Dysentery is much less frequent in natives than in European residents. Consumption and pneumonia are rare, but coughs and bronchitis are common. Cancer is not unknown. Measles and chicken-pox follow a mild course. Scarlet fever does not occur, nor does typhus. It is uncertain whether typhoid fever existed in Burma or has been introduced; it is rare among the natives, but attacks Europeans in a bad form. Venereal diseases lurk in the towns. (For leprosy, see p. 41.) Diarrhœa and cholera recrudesce every hot season. There are no records of other pestilence. Small-pox rages in severe epidemics, but with greatly diminished incidence where vaccination has been accepted. Native practitioners were acquainted with inoculation. In introducing voluntary vaccination the British Government has met with great success. The introduction of this measure exemplifies how grotesque the arguments may be that prevail upon the people. The alleged motive of the government was too improbable; so wiseacres cast about for another. What more likely than a dream of the Queen of England—that a child existed in Burma who would overthrow her dominion! This child could not be known, but it would be reached and removed by the plan of poisoning the blood of the whole generation. It was many years before



279. HOROSCOPE ON PALM-LEAF.

the myth was dispelled. In 1894, when small-pox was known to be approaching from Karenni, the Karén (nat-worshipping) village of Bilin-Mèwaing among others, consisting of sixty souls, submitted to vaccination. The lymph took in all but sixteen cases. Six months later small-pox reached the locality. Twelve

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

has been fulfilled. What had to be done has been accomplished. After this present life there will be no beyond';[44] he has, indeed, attained the full Vision of Deliverance and can cheer and exhort others along the Path.[45] His condition is summed up as a state of self-possession, investigation into the truth, energy, calm, joy, concentration and magnanimity.[46] And this condition, nothing more and nothing less, this, contends Rhys Davids, is Nibbāna. "It is not too much to say that Arahatship is Buddhism"[47] — a philosophy of life which aimed its keenest shafts at all forms of the supernatural and the mysterious and set before men an ideal of self-conquest, a 'final salvation . . . obtainable in this world and in this world alone.'[48]

Now there is much in the apparent attitude of the Burmese Saṃgha to support Rhys David's interpretation. The devout bhikkhu certainly seems to hold before him the attainment of the Nibbāna-condition, the qualities of life which signify the Arahat. His conception of Nibbāna is very closely joined with this ideal. His immediate aim is to excel in the discipline which brings the ideal nearer, subduing the passions and employing the mind in those exercises which belong to the Path.

But two questions arise. The first is the question whether he really expects to realise this ideal and obtain this final salvation in this present life. Theoretically, no doubt, it is possible. In a reference to the *Abhiññā*, the supernormal insight which is attained by the Arahat, the Lēdi Sayādaw insists that in the Buddhist Scriptures we find, clearly shown, the means towards attaining the five supernatural faculties. That we do not see any person endowed with these today, "is due to the lack of strenuous physical and mental exertion towards their attainment."[49] A zealous missioner, held in the highest esteem throughout Burma,[50] few have done more in modern times than the Lēdi Sayādaw himself to encourage his compatriots, whether monks or laymen, to seek the Path. Yet it may be questioned whether he ever really expected any of his followers to attain the supernatural faculties in this present life. In another treatise he warns against false confidence.

"It is ... very difficult to become aware of the attainment of the Paths and of the Fruits. In fact even the Ariyan (saint) who has attained

[44] D. 155 (*cf.* Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, part I, p. 204).
[45] M. i. 146 (*cf.* Chalmers, *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, Vol. I, p. 168.)
[46] Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
[47] *American Lectures*, chap. IV, p. 151.
[48] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, pp. 141 ff.
[49] *Questions on Karma*; *cf.* comment in *M.B.B.*, p. 46.
[50] *Cf.* Thirkell-White, *A Civil Servant in Burma* (1913), chap. XI., p. 197.

342 like to the bamboo sticks and together with them
824 bound to the roof rafters (Figure 2). The larger leaves of the Ingyin (Shorea robusta) (8) are

8. According to J.G. Scott, Burma, 2nd ed., (London, 1911), p. 500; other botanical explanations by H.R. Spearman, British Burma Gazeteer 1 (Rangoon 1880), pp. 125 ff., H.J. Wehrli, Zur Wirtschafts- und Siedlungs-Geographie von Ober-Birma /Economic and Settlements Geography of Upper Burma/ (Zurich, 1906), p. 111; Ferrars, ibid., p. 227.

sometimes seen as roofing material, pinned together in rows /207/ with bamboo pins and squeezed with poles against the roof (Figure 3).
942 The grass roofs, particularly during the windy,
[656] dry winter season, are, of course, an extreme fire hazard and are therefore now prohibited for the cities. There--wherever brick or corrugated tin roofs have not been adopted--a roofing material, called "wakat," a shingle, cut from
355 braided bamboo work is used. As a poor protection in case of fire, which frequently burns down whole villages, a wooden hook, attached to a long handle is employed to tear off those parts of the grass roof which have caught fire and a damper, made of bamboo braided material is used to extinguish the sparks. These two utensils can be seen in practically every house (cf. Plate IV, 1 and especially Plate IV, 3); sometimes a number of jugs, filled with water, are seen standing at the ridge of the roof for purposes of fire fighting.

342 The Burmese attributes good and bad luck in
777 all his undertakings to the influence of the in-
●787 numerable benign and evil spirits (Nat)-who were originally outside the Buddhist creed, and he makes his decisions dependent on omens and oracles

342 of soothsayers (9). Consequently he is naturally
777
●787

9. Bedin-saya, derived from Sanskrit, meaning Veda teacher. Judson's Burmese-English Dictionary (Rangoon, 1893), p. 782.

very careful when it comes to the construction of his house. With the aid of the soothsayer the building site must be investigated, the day and hour when to start the construction, and the choice of the timber have to be considered carefully. The shape of the posts, the irregularities of their forms, the knots in the wood where the branches were furnish important clues for the fate of the future occupants. The number of the
342 posts varies in accordance with the size of the
776 house. Usually six posts are erected for the main tract and each post has its own name. One of the posts is considered by most tribes as the seat of the house spirits. In the Burmese house this is the southeastern corner post of the main
[764] tract. The body of a deceased person is always deposited close to it until the coffin arrives. A coconut always hangs there in honor of the Mahagiri-Nat (Min Magayi), the household spirit /Figure 3--Shan house with leaf roof, Southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye)/ and the coconut must always be replaced when the milk
342 dries up. To avoid bad luck which spirits, liv-
776 ing inside the wood knots, might threaten, the
777 tops of the posts, or at least every third one, are covered with white or red fabric patches; sometimes for good luck, some Thanaka paste (grated rind of Murraya exotica) is smeared on them. Even the clerics do not seem to be immune
346 to the evil influence of these nature spirits,
776 whose origins date back to pre-Buddhistic times,
777 for these protective coverings of the posts can be observed not only at residential dwellings, guest houses, bridges, etc., but also at religi-

346
776 ous buildings, such as monasteries, /208/ monas-
777 tic rest houses and wooden chapels. The bury-
782 ing alive of human sacrifices at the posts of
776 the foundations of the entrances was in old Bur-
mese days considered as an indispensable method of protecting important buildings, such as princely palaces, city gates, bridges, etc. The ghost of the entombed--according to Burmese belief those who have been killed by violence are rooted to the spot where they died--is supposed to watch as a guardian over the building, post, or bridge foundation.

782 As late as the middle of the past century,
●787 more than fifty human beings were buried alive when the foundations for the palace and the city walls of Mandalay were laid. But the protective power of those ghosts was of limited duration. From certain omens it could be predicted that the protection was going to cease, and then it was time to leave the place which was open to disaster. This was the explanation given for the frequent change of residence of the Burmese rulers. The small chapels with their stone images of door guardians at the gates and corners of the walls of the palace area of Mandalay still indicate the locations where these human sacrifices have been buried, though the modern inhabitants will not admit this to a European. At the corners, filled oil jugs were sunk over the buried people; the dwindling of the oil in the containers, which were examined every seven years, foreshadowed an approaching catastrophe in 1880. They tried to avoid this catastrophe with new sacrifices. Nevertheless, it happened. The British occupied the country and the kingdom perished (10).

171
782 10. Primarily, according to Shway Yoe, ibid., pp. 482 ff. It is well known that the burying of live sacrifices at construction foundations is a custom, widespread all over the world,